

## House Republican Press Release

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### Governor Rell makes inspiring opening to new Legislative Session



*By State Representative John J. Ryan*

You could not have missed the news stories on Governor Rell's address opening the new Legislative Session last week. How many of us would be rushing back to work only days after a hospital stay for cancer surgery? Her first six months in office clearly demonstrated a relentless work ethic and intolerance for anything less than the highest standards of integrity; we can now add personal courage to her list of virtues!

In addition to setting a new benchmark for fortitude and strength of will, Governor Rell's remarks set the right tone emphasizing fiscal prudence and the need for government to stress hard work, cooperation and common sense, with no place for partisan political posturing. If this year's Legislative Session can approach the lofty standard of the governor's speech, it will be a successful year indeed.

But the other news on "Opening Day" may have been more reflective of political reality. Hopefully, you had seen some of the press coverage of our House Republican Caucus' positions on much-needed rule changes to open up the legislative process, such as outlawing the post-midnight sessions when the budget is almost always taken up and passed (and of course, no one from the public is watching!) we incorporated that, and other sensible provisions into amendments to this year's legislative rules. Well, to no one's surprise, our attempt to have better public input and observation of the legislative process failed utterly, on 'party line' votes.

Another political reality check occurred later last week, when the last of the various committee chair appointments and leadership positions were announced. As a regular reader of this column, you know that Democrats have a large majority in the House of 99 to 52 (and the Senate has a wider margin, 24-12). So when the majority party announced committee chairs from the House, guess exactly how many were from lower Fairfield County (By the way, I define 'lower Fairfield County' as the coastal towns from Greenwich to Fairfield on I-95 and also the Merritt Parkway towns from New Canaan to Easton)? If your guess was zero, you are a winner! That is correct, no legislators from lower Fairfield County are committee chairs.

The closest committee chair geographically will be Chris Caruso of Bridgeport as the House Chair of the Government, Administration and Elections Committee. But there has to be someone from lower Fairfield County as the vice chair or one of the key 10 subchairs of the crucial Appropriations Committee? Wrong: same answer, none. (Doesn't lower Fairfield County send a very large amount of tax revenue to the State Capitol?) Well then, of the 11 Democrat legislators who head up their caucus leadership as Speaker, Majority Leader and Deputy Majority Leaders, there must be one from lower Fairfield County, right? Nope; again, not a single one.

Do you remember just a few months ago, Democrat legislative candidates campaigning that they would oppose a "Millionaires' Tax," bring more money back from Hartford for education and get action on our transportation issues? Based on the indications from how the House will be organized and led, things do not look promising in my view. Stay tuned!

Please feel free to contact me with your concerns and issues. As your state representative, it is my job, and my priority to represent you and to make sure that your needs and concerns are addressed at the capitol. You can write to me at Room 4200, Legislative Office Building, Hartford, CT 06106-1591, send me e-mail at [John.Ryan@housegop.state.ct.us](mailto:John.Ryan@housegop.state.ct.us) or call my office toll-free at 1-800-842-1423.